



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 4, 2010
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E.COLI CASES TIED TO CHEESE

More than two dozen cases of Escherichia coli (E. coli) in five states are likely tied to cheese sold or tasted at Costco stores in October. Federal, state and local health officials are working to determine the type of cheese causing illness. Preliminary data are pointing to the Dutch style Gouda, but health officials are still investigating. The Arizona State Public Health Laboratory currently is testing several samples.

These illnesses may be associated with cheese served and sold at “Cheese Road Shows” Costco held during the month of October. Costco is fully cooperating with the investigation and stores are voluntarily removing suspect products from its shelves. In order to protect consumer health, Costco is also notifying customers who purchased the cheese and is asking members to return all cheese from the road show.

There are at least 25 confirmed E. coli cases in several states including Arizona (11), California (1), Colorado (8), Nevada (2) and New Mexico (3).

With E. coli people usually will experience symptoms between one and 10 days after consuming a contaminated product. Certain strains of E. coli can cause severe bloody diarrhea and abdominal cramps; sometimes the infection causes non-bloody diarrhea or no symptoms. Usually little or no fever is present, and the illness resolves in five to 10 days.

If you have these symptoms and are concerned, contact your healthcare provider. If you have concerns about your cheese, take it to the Costco where it was purchased.